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Dr. Sayed Hossein Nasr in the Introduction to the book under review has rightly observed that despite the vast scholarly research carried out by the Western Orientalists on Islam, serious attention has been paid by them to the Shī'ite Islām. To this observation of the learned Iranian scholar it may be added that out of the whole contribution of the Shiites made in the various fields of Islamic law, theology and other sciences, what has so far appeared in the Western world in English or any other Western language is confined mainly to philosophy and spiritual sciences, and that too as a part of the general contributions of Muslims in these fields, while all the works of the Shiite authors in the fields of Jurisprudence, law, exegesis (of the Holy Qur'an), history, theology, etc. have so far remained inaccessible for the Western readers, as they have not been rendered into any Western language. It may also be pointed out here that the scholars of the Shi'ite community, particularly of the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent and Iran, are to a great extent responsible for this omission, as they have miserably failed in their duty of introducing Shi'ite literature and thought to the Western world.

In view of the above facts, the present book, like the one preceding it, entitled "Shī'ite Islam," edited and translated by Dr. Nasr, is a commendable effort to present a sample of the extensive corpus of Shi'ite thought and belief to the English speaking world. It may be recalled that the Shi'ite Ismaili literature includes the sayings of the Holy Prophet, peace be upon him, as well as the traditions of the twelve Imams, as according to the Shi'ite belief Ismaiilism means the sayings and practices of a Muta'alla, while according to the Sunni Ismaili is limited to the sayings and practices of the Holy Prophet. Referring to this technical distinction between the Shi'ite and Sunni concepts of Ismailism Dr. Nasr states: "The Imams are like a chain of light issuing forth from the Sunna of Prophecy which is their origin, and they are not separated from the Sunna. Wherever it is said by them must have come from this inestimable treasury of inspired wisdom."

As explained by Dr. Nasr in the Introduction, the present book is the third and final one of a series of three volumes which was planned many years ago with the help and support of professor Kenneth Morgan, then of Oxford University, with the intention of presenting Shi'ite Ismā'īlīism to the Western world from the point of view of Shi'ite Ismailis. The first volume of the series which appeared in English was entitled "Shī'ite Islam" by Allama Sayyid Muhammad Hosayn Tabatabai, edited and translated into English by Dr. Nasr (George Allen & Unwin, London, 1973). The second volume, The Qur'ān in Ismaili was also written by Allama Tabatabai and the Persian version, "Qur'ān dar Ismail," was printed in Tehran. According to Dr. Nasr, most of it was translated into English, but the translation was not completed.

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and after the Islamic Revolution in Iran, the translation of text was not accessible to him, for the present it was not possible to produce the English translation as planned.

Regarding the present volume Allamah Tahabba's made a selection from the vast collections of Shahi’s bakhsh which was translated into English by Dr. Chatecki, an American scholar who is a specialist in Islamic Studies particularly in Islam in Iran and Tunisia. A Doctor in Persian language and literature from Pennsylvania, Dr. Chatecki enjoys full command of both Arabic and Persian. He has written several articles and books on some Badi’s Bakhsh as Rumi, Jami and Shah-d-din Qurni. He has edited and translated Rumi’s "Nejat al-Nujat," and also translated some of the major works of Qurni into English for the first time.

As explained by the "Allah's name in the Foreword of the present book, the sayings and writings presented in this work were selected and translated from the traditions left by the leading Imams of the Shia. "The foremost exponents of Islam." They include expositions elucidating the principle of Pavis, the fundamentals of all Islamic sciences and pursuits, and contains the practical aspects of Islam which are based on moral virtues based on Pavis. These selections include "Ilm al-Naibal" which is considered to be the most valuable work of practical wisdom and the most useful and the best application of the principles of Islamic government.

In making the selection, the "Allah's name has utilized four great works of Shahi's: Haidut, namely, Nejat al-Bakhsh, and Naqsh al-Saqibl al-Saqibl al-Majdil, and Majdil al-SAQA. Of these four books Nejat al-Bakhsh is the famous monumental work containing Aria's Nejat al-Majdil's letters, sermons and sayings collected by Shariati; while Naqsh al-Saqibl al-Saqibl al-Majdil is the collection of perhaps the most beautiful and soul-stirring supplications (or-qa) of Imam "Ali’s Husayn, (Shaykh al-Majdil). Naqsh al-Awaír is an encyclopedic collection of Shi'ah Hadith compiled by the well-known Shi'ah theologian. M. Biqir Majdil (ed. 1111 A.H.), while Mugaddas al-Jina is a standard collection of Shi'ah supplications and prayers to be recited daily or on particular religious occasions, etc. compiled from earlier sources byAbbas Qommi (c. 1239 A.H.).

The book under review has been divided into three parts. Part I contains the Shi'ah Hadith on the Unity of God from the Holy Prophet, Imam "Ali, Imam Majid, Imam At-Tariq al-Qadib, Imam Moqem and Imam "Ali’s ‘Arba”; Part II is a selection of Shi'ah Hadith on the subject of “The Role and Society” from Imam "Ali, while Part III concerns “The Spiritual Life” and contains prayers and supplications of Imam Moqem, Imam "Ali’s Husayn and Imam al-Majdil. Every part is followed by Notes under which the reader has provided some necessary explanations of the contents of the traditions or sayings. This part of Notes is particularly very rich and informative, specifically for the English speaking people.

As regards the method of translation, as explained by the translator himself, he has tried to translate the Arabic contents in a strictly literal manner so as to avoid any personal interpretations which is generally attended with the hazards of misinterpretations.
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Moreover, the translations of technical terms are followed by their Arabic originals in brackets wherever necessary. As regard the quality of the translation, it can easily be judged after comparing this translation with the one done by several others. For example, comparisons can be made between the present translation of the sections from *Nahj al-Balagha* and those done by a number of other persons like S. M. Asad of Hyderabad (Indi) and S. Ali Raza of Karachi.

The importance and value of the book can well be judged from the fact that a considerably large section of the matter contained in the book has been rendered into English for the first time, and in view of the esoteric and metaphysical nature of the contents and highly literary and concise dictions followed in most of the selections, the work of their translation from an oriental language into a European language becomes all the more difficult and arduous. The translator and the publishers both deserve our appreciation and congratulations for embarking on such a useful and valuable task.

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ALI RAZA NAQVI